



Sacred love: Erotic art in the temples of Nepal
A collection by Shivaji Das and Yolanda Yu

Just look up to examine the carved roof struts of any temple in the Kathmandu valley and a whimsical realm of amorous beings appear. Unlike the erotic art of neighbouring India, these explicit carvings on the roof struts are relatively crude, made more with humour than dedication. Elephants turn missionary, beasts love men, and every taboo is violated. The attitude of naughtiness is implausibly similar to that of the Mochica erotic pottery of Peru.

Today, young couples whisper to each other sweet nothings under the tender gazes of these eternal lovers while jaded tourists raise their bazooka cameras to shoot down this unexpected explicitness.

Time has forgotten the real reason for their existence although tour guides will tell you that they are there to protect the temples from the goddess of lightning who happens to be a shy virgin.

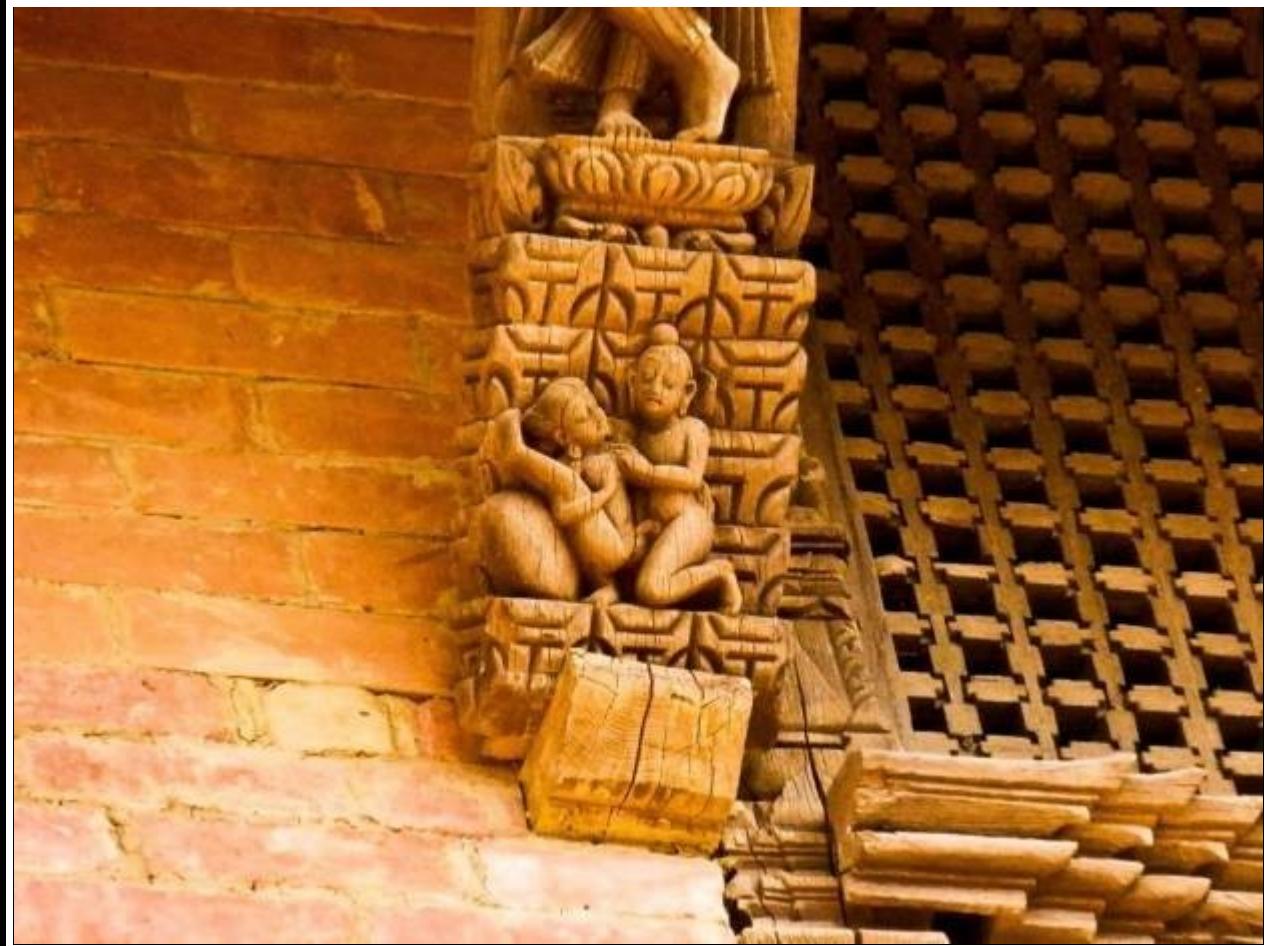


*Even the
burden of
carrying
the lord
isn't
enough to
distract*



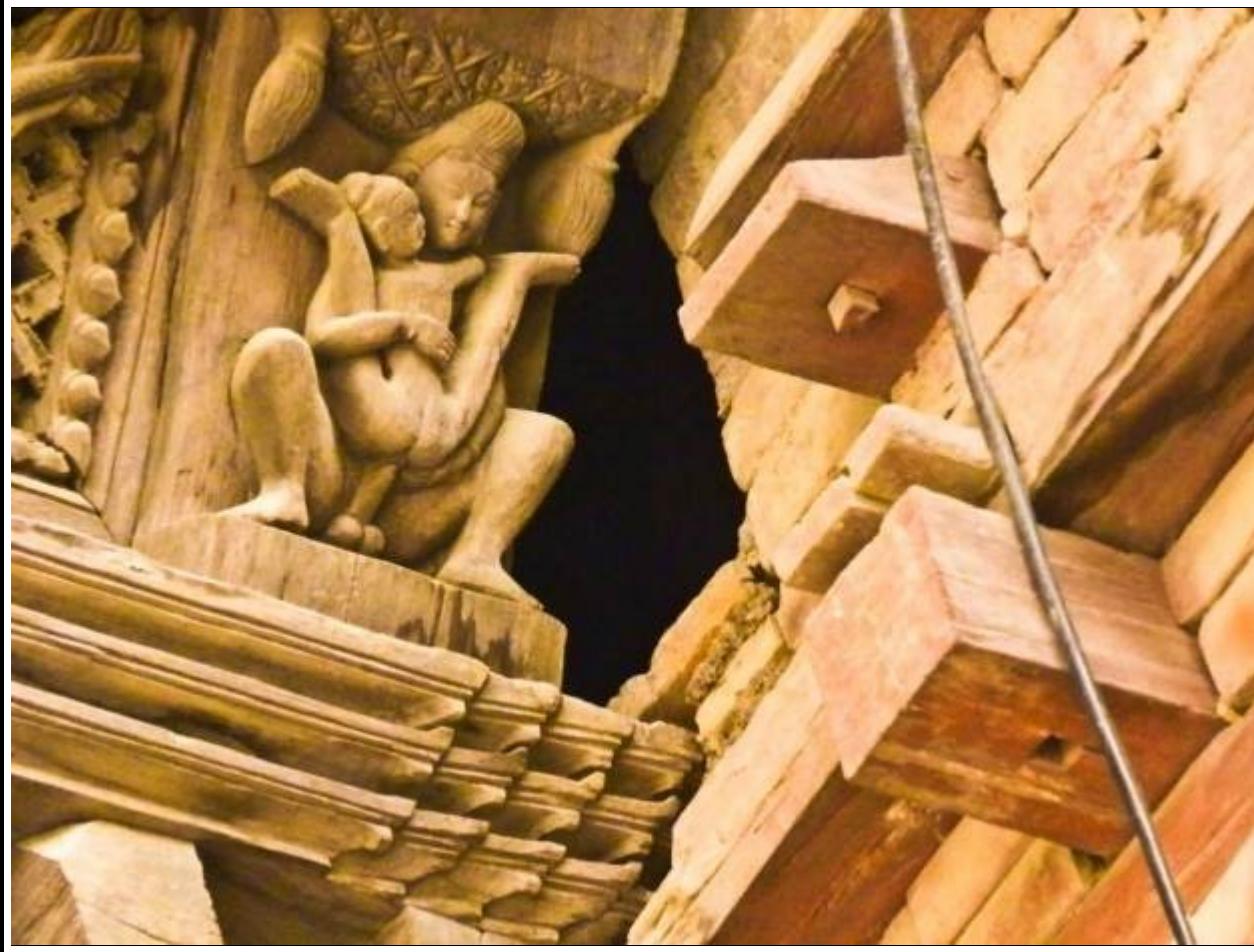
*Faces have
faded
away, but
the
passions
remain*

*Things
that
should
have
happened
behind the
windows.*



*Almost
innocent*





*After all,
love is a
balancing
act...
.. At
times,
precarious*

*But
nothing is
impossible*



*Even the
unspoken*





*Particularl
y alluring...
The
moment of
washing
hair*



*.. or the
opportun
y to wash
linen*

*Even time
can't
break their
bonds*





*Solitude
can be as
gratifying*
...

*... as the
craving
eyes of the
other.*





*In hearts
and
pillars...
there is
always
space*



*And if you
have
faith...
There is an
almighty
just
around the
corner*



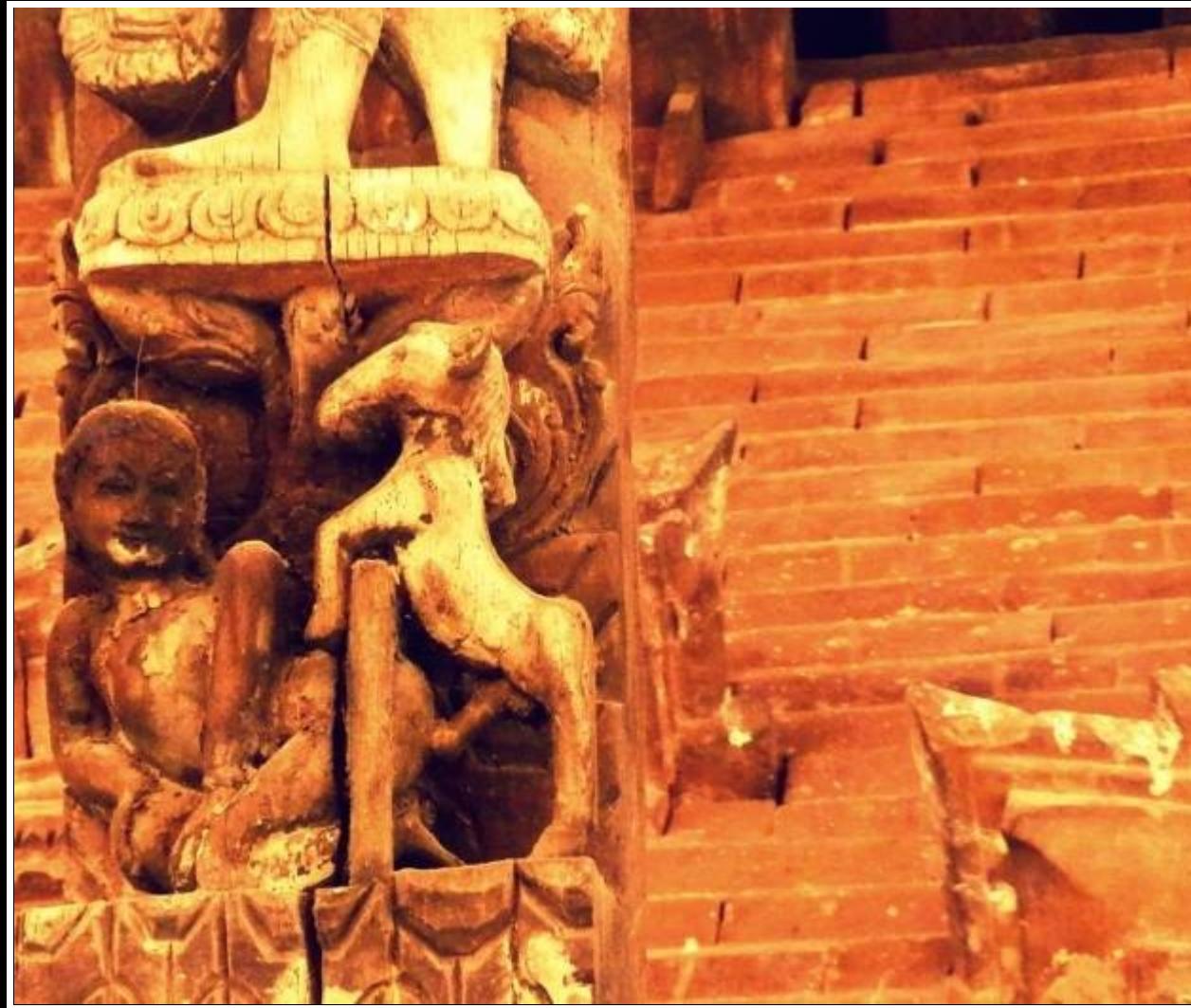
*Dear
cousins
join in...*



*... as do
mythical
beasts*



*In harmony
with
nature...*



*... all life
can
become
one*



*Newer
temples
retain the
acrobatics*
....

*...with
lesser
effort ...
at a
cheaper
price*





*They
inspire the
art for
sale to
tourists*





*Whether
they
inspire
humans?*

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